

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy
Update 2019



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Message from the Warden



The County of Simcoe is proud to release Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy Update 2019, which has been reviewed to realign our housing strategy with the most current federal and provincial policy directives while maintaining our collaborative community voice on housing our future.

Since 2014, the County has been working to realize our goal of creating 2,685 new units in Simcoe County by 2024. With our growing economy, spectacular scenery and tremendous life-style, Simcoe County is experiencing a significant population increase, creating a strain on existing housing stock. Housing our future: Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy involved widespread consultation with numerous stakeholders,

including our Francophone and Indigenous communities, to create a shared community vision for housing needs across our diverse 16 municipalities and two separated cities.

Our comprehensive housing strategy not only addressed the need to repair, sustain and grow municipal, non-profit and co-operative sector housing, but also took a holistic approach to ending homelessness, incorporating plans for enhanced co-ordination across community services and expanded transit networks to support our residents.

To ensure that our 10-year strategy remains in alignment with current federal and provincial policy directives, the County undertook an extensive policy review of the objectives and targets within our initial strategy. This process has allowed the County to focus in on the most crucial aspects of our housing strategy. We have also updated 2014 information to include recent developments, such as our involvement with the formation of local Ontario Health Teams and the creation of our new County-operated transit system that connects communities across the region.

The County is proud of our achievements to-date, including the creation of over 1,200 units to help address homelessness in Simcoe County. Of the original 4,113 units in the social housing portfolio in 2014, currently 94% remain in the mandated social housing portfolio, and 99% of original units continue to be offered at rent geared to income or low end of market rates thanks to County investment. Our team continues to think outside the box and identify ways to make an immediate and long-term impact in our communities, like our hub concept, which offers opportunities for efficiencies by providing space for partners and service providers within our housing developments.

We look forward to continuing to work with businesses and community partners as we carry out our mission to build vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Serge Lavallée". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Background Policy Context

Approved in 2014, Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy (Strategy) will guide the County of Simcoe and its municipal partners from 2014 to 2024, with evidence-informed approaches and a shared community vision of the actions needed to effectively address housing and homelessness needs across the County.

Through the establishment of people-centered priorities for housing and homelessness services the Strategy ensures that the County of Simcoe, as the designated Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), can effectively integrate and direct resources to meet the specific needs of its residents.

In 2016, the Province of Ontario updated its Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) to reflect priorities related to affordable housing in alignment with new achievements like the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiatives (CHPI), Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the goal of ending homelessness. This updated policy statement took effect on July 1, 2016, and will require Service Managers' housing and homelessness plans to be consistent with these new policy directives by 2019.

In 2019, the Province released its Housing Supply Action Plan, aimed at increasing supply in general, as well as its Community Housing Renewal Strategy, aimed at repairing, sustaining and growing the municipal, non-profit and co-operative sector housing system.

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy: Update 2019 includes information about how the County of Simcoe and its municipal, public, private, and not-for-profit sector partners will continue to work together to accomplish provincial strategies and directives. Updates to the Strategy will also ensure alignment with the new National Housing Strategy, released in 2017.



THE STRATEGY

reflects widespread consultation and participation from a diverse range of stakeholders within our community, including:

- Community health and social services staff
- County residents from the general public
- Emergency, transitional and supportive housing providers
- Health System leaders
- Mayors and civic leaders
- Members of the Indigenous and Francophone communities involved in housing and support service delivery
- Non-profit and cooperative housing providers
- Persons with lived-experience of homelessness
- Private Developers and Landlords
- Various municipal, provincial and federal government departmental staff, including municipal Planning Departments
- Youth and family violence shelter providers



Background Local Context

Known for its beautiful beaches, world-class trails, scenic drives, adventure and agri-tourism opportunities, and home to hundreds of manufacturers operating in every niche, the County of Simcoe is experiencing significant population growth. While this presents many exciting new opportunities, population pressures, economic context, and income distribution all impact the cost, affordability, and availability of housing, as well as labour force renewal, and the local economy.

Comprised of two separated cities and 16 towns and townships, characterized by a variety of urban and rural neighbourhoods, as well as populations of strong cultural importance such as Francophone and

Indigenous communities, the County of Simcoe has diverse characteristics and needs.

To meet these needs, the County and its partners are working to create solutions across the region to achieve the housing targets, while also investing in more coordinated approaches to regional public services and transit infrastructure.

The Strategy reflects a shared community vision of the actions, tools and policy decisions required to build vibrant, healthy, sustainable communities in the County of Simcoe.

Community consultation was not only extensively sought in the development of the Strategy, but has

been a cornerstone of its ongoing implementation through: engagement of community stakeholder groups, municipal deputations with local councils, sector-specific roundtables and committees, and public events like the Affordable Housing Innovations Forum, and new development Open Houses.

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy: Update 2019 will ensure compliance with provincial and federal policy directives, while also maintaining the spirit and voice of community collaboration— working together in housing our future.



WE VALUE

- Access to housing options and necessary supports throughout the life cycle
- Diversity in our housing stock, ensuring variety of tenure, affordability, style, and proximity to amenities
- Housing as a vehicle for improved health, community vitality, civic engagement, economic prosperity and social sustainability
- Collaboration amongst levels of government, community partners and systems, recognizing that the need for safe, affordable, healthy housing connects all of our mandates as we strive for people-centered solutions
- Support for the critical role of the private sector in the creation of housing stock
- Social sustainability and inclusivity for all local residents, regardless of economics and population growth
- Financial stewardship in maintaining existing community housing, investing in additional affordable housing, and helping people move from homelessness into housing



ENDING HOMELESSNESS

starts with helping all people who experience homelessness access housing with the supports they need as quickly as possible.

Best Practices for Housing Our Future

Safe, affordable housing options allow residents to participate in the many aspects of community life that ensure a sense of community belonging and ownership over their future. Having a home increases a resident's access to health and social services, opportunities to fully participate in the labour force, and even influences the decisions made by various levels of government and other institutions. Without a home, residents have limited power to reach their personal and economic potential and to participate fully in all aspects of the community, including health care, educational opportunities, employment and training options.

The Strategy is underpinned by a set of best practices grounded in evidence-informed research and reflective of current trends and realities. These best practices are also in alignment with the Province's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, Housing Supply Action Plan, and Community Housing Renewal Strategy.

A Goal of Ending Homelessness

The Strategy recognizes that housing is the only known cure to ending homelessness.

The County of Simcoe is working with all levels of government and its community partners to move towards a housing stability focus as part of managing homelessness.

Local homelessness enumeration exercises will be conducted every two years. Enumerations will assist the County and its community partners in better understanding local homelessness trends over time, monitoring program success, reporting on progress towards ending homelessness, and decision-making related to prioritization of needs and service delivery.



A Housing First Philosophy

'Housing First' promotes assisting homeless individuals first to meet their housing needs, before they are required to meet other treatment expectations or other supports are implemented. The County of Simcoe is focused on implementing Housing First principles when addressing the needs of residents experiencing chronic homelessness and other complex or co-occurring issues. Case management and supports will be provided to individuals as they are housed in an effort to ensure successful tenancies.

In late June, 2017, County Council approved implementation of a regionalized Housing First (HF) program. Implementation occurred across September 2017 to December 2017; the program is now fully operational. The program features a skilled support team of Case Managers and Housing Specialists, in conjunction with immediate access to rent subsidies (for up to three years), and other financial supports for housing placements. While Case Managers focus on client support and service coordination, Housing Specialists focus on cultivating relationships with local landlords to build greater housing stock capacity at the community level. Once housed, individuals can then be referred to a range of additional services as may be required (i.e. financial supports; primary medical care; counselling; access to mental health programs; addiction services; etc.) As at August, 2019, of the 170 Housing First participants, 131 or 77% were housed.

The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System has been implemented to enable the County to measure performance in meeting goals to prevent and end homelessness including housing placement and retention across the County. The system will be fully implemented across all County-funded homeless programs in 2019.

People-Centered Solutions

The County is committed to people-centered solutions that ensure service delivery is accessible, inclusive, culturally appropriate, and able to support a broad range of community needs. This work will be accomplished through capacity building for service providers, improved access through better service coordination and more integrated human services planning and delivery, fostering new and innovative partnerships, improved and streamlined assessment tools, development of common languages, indicators, and data collection for consistent monitoring, reporting, and decision making.



Our Strategy is accessible, inclusive, culturally appropriate, and able to support a broad range of community needs

Commitment to a Range of Affordable Housing Options

The concept of a housing continuum can help us understand the range of needs and housing that is required for a diverse community and population.



A range of housing types and supports is necessary to meet people's changing needs

It is important to note that the housing continuum does not represent a range of housing types through which individuals are expected to progress. Every person has different needs, desires and capacities and will not necessarily progress through the continuum in a linear fashion. Housing need can be understood in terms of life cycle stages. Individuals' and families' specific housing needs will change over time. A range of housing types and supports is necessary to meet people's changing needs throughout the life cycle and to accommodate the ways that households can be formed, re-constituted and permanently altered over time.

The housing continuum can also be analyzed in terms of an individual or household's need for support, and the type(s) of support required. Variations in independence and need for support throughout the continuum must be taken into consideration when planning the provision of housing and human services. The range of supports that may be required

is wide; it can include life skills training, psycho-social counselling, medical care, and supervision, among others.

The continuum illustrates the need for an appropriate range and quantity of different types, built-forms, tenures, and affordability levels of housing. Innovative approaches to affordable housing are encouraged. The County is committed to working with its municipal planning partners to explore a range of land-use planning and financial tools to encourage increased private sector participation in the development of affordable housing options; in both rental and ownership markets.

Throughout its planning and service delivery, the County will consider the needs of households across the housing continuum, from households currently experiencing homelessness to households residing in owned market housing.

Continued Collaboration

All partners including local municipalities, other levels of government, community housing providers and the private sector have important roles to play in ensuring the development of affordable housing. In addition the County will seek to work with the health and corrections sectors to improve service delivery and co-ordination.

Achieving an Evidence Informed System

Since the onset of the Strategy, the County of Simcoe has reported annually to the public on progress made towards implementation of the action items outlined in the Strategy. Throughout this process, the County has developed a number of tracking and measurement systems for capturing measures taken and progress achieved towards the implementation of the Strategy.

In 2015, the Province of Ontario launched an ongoing Housing and Homelessness Data Strategy to support building an evidence-informed system which will collect, manage, access, and use housing and homelessness data to build an evidence-informed system.

The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) has been implemented to enable the County to measure performance in meeting goals to prevent and end homelessness including housing placement and retention across the County. The system will be fully implemented across all County-funded homeless programs in 2019.



Outcome Focused Service Delivery

As part of the Province's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, there is a strengthened focus on Service Managers including tangible performance metrics for evaluation of outcomes, and assessing the impact of activities and objectives within their respective plans. A template for reporting objectives and targets has been provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing-

Housing Policy Branch. The County of Simcoe will integrate this template, attached as **Appendix 3** to this Update, into its reporting on the Strategy. In addition, through the Provincial Housing and Homelessness Data Forum a performance measurement framework will be developed for the Province's new Community Housing Renewal Strategy.

In implementing **Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy**, the County utilizes

a form of results based accountability for reporting. This framework seeks to report on a number of indicators, including:

- outputs (how much did we do?),
- performance measures (how well did we do it?), and
- outcomes (is anyone better off?)

Reporting metrics will continue to be developed and refined, including bi-annual homelessness enumerations and implementation of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). Annual reports on the Strategy will continue to be promoted to the public and local municipalities.

Through the National Housing Strategy, the federal government is committing \$241 million over 10-years to enhance housing research, data and demonstrations. As announced in Budget 2017, Statistics Canada will develop a comprehensive housing database that integrates social, economic, and financial information to provide official housing statistics.

The County of Simcoe will make use of these sources to collect and utilize data to inform its housing policies and programs. Improved data will better enable the County to measure and assess the impact of programs and policies, anticipate and respond to economic fluctuations and housing market variations.



Our Community

10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy: Update 2019, provides a review of the objectives and targets set within the initial Strategy, and analyzes whether they continue to accurately address current housing needs within the context of changing external and internal factors, current housing and homelessness programs, and local housing policies and initiatives.

According to the Housing Services Act, 2011 (HSA), housing and homelessness plans need to include: an assessment of current and future housing needs, clear objectives and targets related to housing needs, a description of the measures proposed to meet the objectives and targets, and a description of how progress towards meeting the objectives and targets, will be measured.

The County of Simcoe has conducted a policy review, and will continue to strengthen its support for affordable housing, focusing on:

- An appropriate supply and mix of housing by utilizing the range of land use planning and municipal finance tools that are available to increase affordable housing
- Improving access to housing and supports to help people achieve housing stability
- The importance of housing as a social determinant of health; the County is an active partner in the applications process for the new Ontario Health Teams across the region
- Enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of the community housing system
- Enhancing housing options and accessibility for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, and people with disabilities
- Collaborating with Indigenous organizations to address the unique housing challenges and needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples
- Advancing our long-term goal of ending homelessness, including measuring progress on chronic homelessness, youth homelessness, homelessness amongst Indigenous peoples and homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions and service systems
- Working with other levels of government to achieve an evidence-informed system, through continued reporting on performance indicators and conducting a local enumeration of the homeless population to better understand and meet the needs of our community.



IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Implementation of the Strategy has been broken down into three Phases. Phase One ran from 2014-2017, Phase Two runs from 2018-2020, and Phase 3 will run from 2021-2023.

Each Phase has a target to create 895 units of affordable housing. The Implementation Plan for Phase Two is included as Appendix 1 to Update 2019, and specific references to the Plan are made under each section of Update 2019 that deals with the Strategic Themes of the Strategy.

10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

The Strategy update reflects data, policies, and best practices that have been identified within a number of documents published since the initial Strategy was released in 2014. Documents used to influence the Strategy update include:

- Building Foundations, Building Futures: Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, 2010
- Housing Services Act, 2011
- Housing Our Future—Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategy, 2014
- Ontario Housing Policy Statement, 2011
- Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2014
- Report of the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness—A Place to Call Home, 2015
- Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update—Social Housing Modernization: Technical Document, 2016
- Ontario's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, 2016
- Policy Statement: Service Manager Housing and Homelessness Plans, 2016
- Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016
- Statistics Canada Census, 2016
- Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), Program Guidelines, 2017
- Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, 2019
- National Housing Strategy—A Place to Call Home, 2017
- County of Simcoe Centralized Waitlist Report, 2017
- County of Simcoe Ontario Works Caseload and Economic Indicators Report, 2017
- A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019
- Five-Year Review of Housing and Homelessness Plans: A Guide for Ontario Service Managers, 2018
- Simcoe County Positive Aging Strategy, 2018-2023
- Ontario's Community Housing Renewal Strategy, 2019
- Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan, 2019

Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs

Population Pressure

The County of Simcoe continued to see population growth from 2001 to 2016.



Year	Population Size in Simcoe County	Population Change Compared to Previous Year
2001	377,050	-
2006	422,204	12.0%
2011	446,063	5.7%
2016	479,650	7.5%

Structural Type of Dwelling

The County of Simcoe is seeing a rise in the percentage of row housing dwellings and a slight decrease in the percentage of single detached houses.



	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single-detached house	117,725	75.1%	126,965	74.9%	135,135	73.6%
Apartment in a building that has five or more storeys	5,215	3.3%	5,595	3.3%	6,050	3.3%
Movable dwelling	1,050	0.7%	920	0.5%	710	0.4%
Semi-detached house	5,655	3.6%	5,815	3.4%	6,550	3.6%
Row house	8,175	5.2%	10,055	5.9%	12,070	6.6%
Apartment or flat in a duplex	5,735	3.7%	6,445	3.8%	7,455	4.1%
Apartment in a building that has fewer than five storeys	12,695	8.1%	13,320	7.9%	15,090	8.2%
Other single-attached house	435	0.3%	355	0.2%	480	0.3%

Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs

Household Type

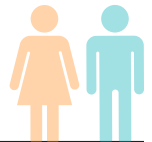
The percentage of one-census family households has increased in the last 5 years.



	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
One-Census-Family Households	116,385	74.3%	114,435	67.5%	131,340	71.6%
Multiple-Census-Family Households	3,100	2.0%	12,605	7.4%	4,705	2.6%
Non-Census-Family Households	37,165	23.7%	42,425	25.0%	47,490	25.9%

Relationship Type of Census Families

The percentage of common law couples and lone parent families has increased.



	2006 (20% sample)		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total couple families	105,090	85.7%	109,840	84.0%	117,765	83.6%
Married couples	88,885	72.5%	91,305	69.8%	96,305	68.3%
Common-law couples	16,200	13.2%	18,530	14.2%	21,465	15.2%
Total lone-parent families by sex of parent and number of children	17,560	14.3%	20,955	16.0%	23,135	16.4%
Female parent	13,940	11.4%	16,300	12.5%	17,900	12.7%
Male parent	3,620	3.0%	4,655	3.6%	5,235	3.7%

Dwellings in Need of Major Repair

The percentage of household dwellings in need of major repair has decreased slightly from 6.0% in 2006 to 5.6% in 2016, although the number of dwellings still increased from 9,415 in 2006 to 10,290 in 2016.

Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs

Owner Estimated Value of Owned Dwellings

The average value of owned dwellings dramatically increased from \$273,992 in 2006 to \$416,640 in 2016.

Owner and Renter Households Spending 30% or More of Their Income on Rent or Owner Major Payments

The percentage of tenant-occupied households spending 30% or more of their household income on gross rent has increased from 46.1% in 2006 to 48.7% in 2016. The percentage of owner households spending 30% or more of household income on owner's major payments decreased from 21.9% in 2006 to 19.6% in 2016.



	2006		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Tenant-occupied households spending 30% or more of household income on gross rent	13,500	46.1%			18,745	48.7%
Owner households spending 30% or more of household income on owner's major payments	27,515	21.9%			27,975	19.6%

Note data from 2011 is not included because it was collected through the optional 2011 National Household Survey.

Median Total and After-Tax Income of Households

The median total income of households has increased from \$62,328 in 2006 to \$76,489 in 2016. The median after-tax income of households increased from \$53,436 in 2006 to \$67,022 in 2016.

The prevalence of low income after tax (based on Low Income Cut-Off) has decreased from 6.6% in 2006 to 5.3% in 2016.

Tenure

The percentage of renter households has increased.



	2006 (20% sample)		2011		2016	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Owners	127,140	81.2%			144,705	78.9%
Renters	29,500	18.8%			38,700	21.1%

Note data from 2011 is not included because it was collected through the optional 2011 National Household Survey.

Data Sources: 2006, 2011 and 2016 Census Profiles, Statistics Canada

Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs



Average Market Rents

Apartments (Rent per month)	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 + Bedroom
Barrie, Essa, Innisfil and Springwater	\$848	\$1,141	\$1,331	\$1,472
Collingwood, Clearview and Wasaga Beach	*	\$918	\$1,082	\$*
Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay and Tiny	\$613	\$860	\$1,013	\$1,045
Orillia, Oro-Medonte, Ramara and Severn	\$669	\$894	\$1,053	\$1,322
Bradford West Gwillimbury, Adjala-Tosorontio and New Tecumseth	\$951	\$977	\$1,181	\$1,436

Data Source: CMHC Fall 2018 Rental Market Reports. * indicates level of reliability is Poor (Do Not Publish).



Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs

Alternate Approved Average Market rents under Investment in Affordable Housing Rent Supplement and Municipal Rent Subsidy Programs

Area	Unit Type	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 + Bedroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrie • Essa • Innisfil • Springwater 	Apartment	\$880	\$1,120	\$1,420	\$1,650
	Townhouse/Semi	-	-	\$1,380	\$1,640
	Single	-	-	\$1,590	\$1,930
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collingwood • Clearview • Wasaga Beach 	Apartment	\$970	\$1,090	\$1,420	\$1,840
	Townhouse/Semi	-	-	\$1,060	\$1,740
	Single	-	-	\$1,620	\$1,890
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midland • Penetanguishene • Tay • Tiny 	Apartment	\$740	\$940	\$1,180	\$1,360
	Townhouse/Semi	-	-	\$1,130	\$1,580
	Single	-	-	\$1,460	\$1,580
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orillia • Oro-Medonte • Ramara • Severn 	Apartment	\$800	\$980	\$1,240	\$1,660
	Townhouse/Semi	-	-	\$1,040	\$1,570
	Single	-	-	\$1,150	\$2,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradford West Gwillimbury • Adjala-Tosorontio • New Tecumseth 	Apartment	\$900	\$1,090	\$1,320	\$1,690
	Townhouse/Semi	-	-	-	\$1,700
	Single	-	-	\$1,630	\$2,020

Data Source: Research Analysis Project, County of Simcoe, Summer 2017.

The data confirms the continued need for an increased supply of affordable housing in the County of Simcoe, particularly the need for rental housing. The target of 2,685 units by 2024, while requiring significant investments to achieve it, is still considered as a minimum target towards meeting the needs across the County.

Objectives, Targets and Achievements

The Strategy is arranged according to five strategic themes. A Summary of the Strategy Opportunities and Priority Actions, arranged according to these themes, is attached as **Appendix 2**. Set out below are the Update 2019 sections that address the five themes.



5 Strategic Themes Summarized



Establish Strong Governance and Leadership

Desired Outcome

Successful implementation of the Strategy is supported by working partnerships with the community housing and private sectors, and all levels of government.

Key Concepts

Partnerships | Support for the Private Housing Market | Collaboration Amongst all Levels of Government | Tracking, Measurement and Reporting



Achieve Affordable Housing Target

Desired Outcome

Simcoe County residents have access to a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units by 2024.

Key Concepts

Achieving Target | Increasing Supply | Addressing Pressure Points | Supporting Those in Greatest Need | Addressing a Broad Range of Community Needs



Protect Existing Public Assets

Desired Outcome

85% of existing social housing units in the County remain part of the housing stock.

Key Concepts

Protecting Existing Housing Stock | Environmental Sustainability | Non-Profit and Co-operative Social Housing Providers | Capacity Building



Plan for the Public Good

Desired Outcome

All municipalities adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the County of Simcoe.

Key Concepts

Supporting Member Municipalities | Encouraging Private Development | Increase Education for and About Affordable Housing



Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports

Desired Outcome

People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.

Key Concepts

Supporting A Housing First Approach | Goal of Ending Homelessness | Enhanced Coordination with Other Community Services | Improving Data on Incidence and Scope | People-Centred Program and Service Delivery

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

Establish Strong Leadership and Governance

THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

1.1 Federal and Provincial Governments

- Continued provision and oversight of policies and legislation that promote affordable housing
- Funding programs for direct delivery by other levels of government, as well as, delivery by Service Manager (SM).

1.2 County of Simcoe as Consolidated Municipal Service Manager

- As the SM for the area, the County of Simcoe will continue to plan, deliver, administer and fund housing and homelessness programs within the service area, including the direct provision of housing through the Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC)
- Continuation of Council leadership, including the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, which comprises both elected and non-elected representatives
- Administer the community housing system under the Housing Services Act
- Develop and implement a 10-year local housing and homelessness plan
- Delivery of housing and homelessness prevention programs and initiatives
- Promote land use planning policies that ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing options, in complete communities, across the housing continuum, in keeping with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2019
- Promote the benefits of affordable housing to the local community
- Improve service delivery collaboration and co-ordination with the health sector, community, and social services agencies.

1.3 Local Municipalities

- Adopt financial incentives, planning, and policy tools that facilitate and promote affordable housing development
- Participate in a Municipal Liaison Group (MLG) for the purpose of sharing best practices, and tracking and monitoring progress made at the local-municipal level
- Promote the benefits of affordable housing to the local community

1.4 The Private Sector

- Collaborate to create affordable homeownership options within the housing market
- Collaborate to create affordable rental options within the housing market, including secondary suites.

1.5 Community Housing Providers and Community Agencies

- Continue to own and operate public, non-profit and cooperative community housing
- Explore and participate in funding opportunities to improve community housing stock
- Improve service delivery collaboration and co-ordination with the health sector, community, and social services agencies.

1.6 County residents

- Consider becoming a landlord, e.g. through creation of secondary suites
- Increased support for local affordable housing initiatives and new developments
- Get to know the affordable housing programs and incentives available in the County



AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Strategy outlined the importance of establishing a governance structure to oversee the implementation process.

An Affordable Housing Advisory (AHA) Committee of County Council was established in 2014, comprising both elected and non-elected representatives. Since this time, under approval by County Council, the AHA Committee has worked together with County staff to translate objectives in the Strategy into specific recommendations for action, as outlined in Implementation Plans: Phase One (2014-2017) and Phase Two (2018-2020). Advice and recommendations will continue to be brought to Council regarding implementation of the Strategy.

TRACKING, MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

The provincial Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) requires all service managers to submit annual reports to the Province, and public, on progress achieved towards the objectives and targets outlined in their respective housing and homelessness prevention plans.

The new LTAHS Update highlights an increased focus on the need for outcome-based performance measurement, in addition to collecting data on outputs.

Since the onset of the Strategy, the County of Simcoe has used a form of outcomes-based reporting to report annually to the Province and public on a number of population-level, and performance-level outcomes. The County of Simcoe uses a results based accountability framework to report on a number of indicators which measure the performance of programs and services for County residents.

The LTAHS Update also provides a template for Service Manager reporting on progress of housing and homelessness plans, to be included in annual reports. This template is meant to provide a consistent format for reporting, and can be utilized in addition to Service Managers' current reporting techniques.

The County of the Simcoe's current reporting mechanisms align with this template; as such, the County of Simcoe will incorporate this reporting template, attached as **Appendix 3** to this Update, in its annual reports.

MOVING FORWARD IN HOUSING OUR FUTURE (2019 - 2024)

See Implementation Plan: Phase 2, pages 6-7, for more information on progress achieved to-date, and action steps to be undertaken throughout 2018-2020, and the duration of the Strategy.





STRATEGIC THEME TWO

Achieve Affordable Housing Target

2.1 Achieving a Minimum of 2,685 New Units by 2024

The Strategy has set a target to create a minimum of 2,685 new units by 2024, to be achieved through new development, acquisition/rehabilitation, renovation/conversion, secondary suites, affordable homeownership and/or rent supplements/housing allowances. 1,536 units had been created as of June 30, 2019, representing 57% of the overall target to 2024.

The Strategy recognizes the importance of developing a strong housing continuum characterized by a range of affordable housing options. Work underway is in alignment with Ontario’s Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update, 2016, (LTAHS Update) and the new Ontario Housing Supply Action Plan and Community Housing Renewal Strategy.

- The County continues to work on opportunities that leverage existing County or municipally-owned land for the development of a range of affordable housing, including lands offered under a 2016 Call for Proposals Process.
- The County and its municipal partners are pursuing innovative solutions that are cost-efficient and maximize on existing infrastructure. New SCHC developments have added affordable units alongside existing rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units.
- The Homeownership Program continues to adjust down-payment rates to accommodate market price changes.
- The County and its member municipalities continue to explore and use a number of municipal housing tools and incentives to encourage private development, such as development charge relief, waived or deferred fees, and Community Improvement Plans.

- Secondary suites developed by the private market outside of government funding continue to increase as the Province requires municipalities to adopt permissive planning policies allowing secondary suites, as well as exempting secondary suites in new homes from development charges.

Successful achievement of targets will come from proactive planning, and development of a range of affordable housing options. Well executed poverty reduction strategies will result in stronger mixed-income communities. Ongoing monitoring of private market housing prices and rents will be important to understand community needs as they grow and change.

2.2 Targets by Geography

As stated in the Strategy the target to create 2,685 units, although quite ambitious given the competing demands for limited resources, is considered the minimum target for affordable housing developments by 2024.

Simcoe County contains 93 recognized settlement areas. The Provincial Growth Plan, 2019, speaks to the development of “complete communities” which include the provision of convenient access to most of the necessities of daily living for residents including jobs, local stores and services (i.e. schools, health/dental, banking), and a full range of housing and transportation options.

Originally, the Strategy target was broken down into specific targets by municipality (see chart). Progress on target achievement has been more rapid in some areas, for example reflecting households that gravitate to urban areas to be closer to community support services.

Specific targets by municipality

Municipality	Target Units	Units Created*	% of Target Achieved
Adjala-Tosorontio	52	6	12%
Bradford West Gwillimbury	202	56	28%
Clearview	79	13	16%
Collingwood	134	99	74%
Essa	86	18	21%
Innisfil	224	88	39%
Midland	90	114	127%
New Tecumseth	241	97	40%
Oro-Medonte	108	9	8%
Penetanguishene	44	62	141%
Ramara	52	3	6%
Severn	68	18	26%
Springwater	96	11	11%
Tay	46	13	28%
Tiny	50	15	30%
Wasaga Beach	110	39	35%
Barrie	840	659	78%
Orillia	164	163	99%

*Units created as of June 30, 2019, does not include rent supplements on refill.



Our Strategy recognizes the importance of developing a strong housing continuum characterized by a range of affordable housing options

There is a need for affordable housing in each municipality, however, opportunities may arise for some municipalities to exceed their targets, for example through a land purchase opportunity or a funding opportunity that is tied to particular client groups.

The Strategy Update 2019 will continue efforts to achieve targets in each municipality. There may be situations that align with the policy of developing complete communities, in which a flexible approach could be taken that does not adhere strictly to the targets by municipality. In these unique situations, consideration could be given to targeting units within the broader geographical areas of the County.

2.3 Addressing a Broad Range of Community Needs

The County of Simcoe and its partners continue to work diligently to meet affordable housing targets with attention to the needs of specific sub-populations within the community.

The County currently employs strategies and programs to serve the housing needs of victims of domestic violence, Indigenous peoples living off-reserve, youth, persons with physical disabilities, seniors, persons with mental health or addictions issues, and those experiencing chronic homelessness. Key findings from the 2018 Homelessness Enumeration illustrate that youth, and persons who identify as Indigenous are over represented among the homeless population.

With a heightened commitment to service delivery that is inclusive and culturally appropriate, the County will continue to expand its focus; actively engaging and/or consulting, as needed, with service providers and various sub-populations in relation to creating units and/or providing supports suitable to a variety of needs including, but not limited to the needs of:

- Indigenous persons/families
- Franco-Ontarians
- Newcomers and refugees
- Youth
- Seniors
- Single people
- Lone-parent families
- Low-to-moderate income households
- Persons experiencing chronic homelessness
- LGBTQ
- Persons fleeing domestic violence
- Survivors of human-trafficking
- Persons with developmental disabilities
- Persons with physical disabilities/ accessibility needs
- Persons with mental health/ addictions needs
- Persons transitioning from institutional housing, such as child welfare, hospitals, or incarceration



Together with its community partners, the County of Simcoe will continue cultural competency and awareness education to better understand the unique needs of different groups of people.

In regards to Indigenous Peoples the County will work with Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, and the Simcoe Indigenous Community Advisory Board to identify service gaps and opportunities to target service delivery. Indigenous service providers, including the Barrie Native Friendship Centre, the Georgian Bay Native Friendship Centre and Indigenous service providers, e.g.,

Biminaawzogin Regional Aboriginal Women's Circle (BRAWC) and Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle (BANAC) will have connections with the County on identifying options to better work with Indigenous peoples.

Planning culturally competent services for people experiencing homelessness who belong to the sub-population groups above is informed through broad representation that forms community advisory boards. For example, the Simcoe County Community Advisory Board is comprised of representatives of people with lived experience of homelessness, Indigenous peoples, and service providers in mental health,

correctional services, intellectual disabilities, and LGBTQ services. The approaches to delivering services are tailored to the needs of the population served, for example, unsheltered people experiencing homelessness are provided street outreach services with workers who regularly visit people who stay in encampments, parks and other settings to: provide information about and facilitate access to available services; provide food, water and other life-sustaining supplies and services; and to offer help in developing and implementing individualized housing plans.



Together with its community partners, the County of Simcoe will continue cultural competency and awareness education to better understand the unique needs of different groups of people.



2.4 Supporting Those in Greatest Need

Ending homelessness requires successfully housing our most vulnerable residents; those who are often the most difficult to house. Strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness incorporate innovative approaches and a Housing First philosophy. Also, the effective identification of and assistance to individuals based on their own unique needs will support those in greatest need.

The introduction of a Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), a brief survey that can be conducted to quickly determine whether a client has high, moderate, or low acuity, has helped service providers prioritize which clients should be given a full SPDAT assessment. Because it is a self-reported survey, no special training is required to use the VI-SPDAT. The use of this tool better enables alignment of clients with the types of housing and supports that will meet their needs.

In 2018, County Council approved a policy to allocate five percent of the number of units created in future new developments by Simcoe County Housing Corporation (SCHC) in urban communities to Housing First clients, either directly in the new buildings or in other SCHC properties in proximity to the new buildings.

Together with community partners the County will further support individuals to access and sustain rental housing through the RentSmart program. This program provides education to current and prospective tenants about the rights and responsibilities of maintaining a tenancy. The program can also be promoted to landlords as a 'reference'.



2.5 Addressing Pressure Points

In 2018, the number of applicants on the Centralized Waitlist (CWL) increased 23.3% over the previous year, for a total of 3,907 applicants. Of those applicants, 27.3% were seniors, 46.6% were adults with no dependants, and 26.1% were households with dependants.

Under its Community Housing Renewal Strategy, the Province will look at transforming the current rent-geared-to-income (RGI) wait list system into a comprehensive housing access system. The Strategy goals of creating an integrated service model for housing and supports, and adaptively re-using under-used housing resources, including a review of overhousing situations in current RGI units, aligns with this Provincial intent.

According to the County's 2018 Homelessness Enumeration Report, single adults were the largest group of people experiencing homelessness and were overrepresented (70%) compared to the percentage of single adults in the general population (18%).

With a large portion of CWL applicants being singles or couples without dependants, and a large portion of singles experiencing homelessness, the County will continue to emphasize access to, and development of, primarily one- and two-bedroom units to address affordable housing pressure points, and improve the range of options available to single individuals and single-parent families.

Furthermore, new approaches to provide housing affordability assistance to residents of Simcoe County will be considered by optimizing access to, and use of, rent supplements and/or other housing assistance options, such as portable housing benefits.



2.6 Definitions and Tracking: Meeting a Range of Affordability amidst a Changing Market

Since the release of the Strategy in 2014, there have been substantial increases to average market homeownership prices and, to a lesser extent, average rental prices. Subsequent to the release of the Strategy document, County Council approved definitions of affordability in relation to rents and house prices, which are being used as they change over time to track targets being achieved under the Strategy, rather than using the originally proposed income bands. Rent supplements and housing first rent subsidies will continue to be used as a means to support affordability for people with lower incomes.

The definitions are set out in the table below:

Definition of a Unit	
A unit can be a “self-contained” unit with kitchen and bathroom facilities contained within the unit and/or it may include a shared accommodation where individuals have private sleeping areas and share a kitchen, bathroom and living space. The unit is to be modest in size and amenities and is offered at or below annual Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation* (CMHC), or as otherwise set through local research, market rent for the area.	
Type of Unit Counted Towards Target	Considerations
Rent Supplement / Housing Allowance	Subsidy must be available for a minimum of five years and the rent for the unit cannot exceed the annual market rent established by CMHC, or alternate approved AMRs.
New Rental Development, New Supply Built With or Without Government Funding	Rent cannot exceed the annual CMHC market rent* or alternate approved AMRs for the area at initial take up.
Second Suite/Garden Suite, New Supply Built With Government Funding	Rent cannot exceed the annual CMHC market rent* or alternate approved AMRs for the area at initial take up.
Second Suite/Garden Suite, New Supply Without Government Funding	No rent cap, however, a discount rate will apply to address exceptions, based on annual research.
Homeownership, New Supply Built With Government Funding	Price of the house cannot exceed average annual resale for area. These affordable homeownership units are created under the federal-provincial funding programs.
Homeownership, New Supply Built Without Government Funding	Maximum house price amounts are set uniquely for 18 municipalities using the lower value of: calculated maximum house price based on median household income, or of regional maximum 10% below average resale price.

MOVING FORWARD IN HOUSING OUR FUTURE (2019 - 2024)

See Implementation Plan: Phase 2, pages 8-9 for more information on progress achieved to-date, and action steps to be undertaken throughout 2018-2020, and the duration of the Strategy.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

Protect Existing Public Assets

Desired Outcome: 85% of existing social housing units in the County remain part of the housing stock.

3.1 Protecting Existing Housing Stock

Significant investments have been made by all levels of government to build and operate rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing (social housing). The Province's Community Housing Renewal Strategy aims to sustain and grow the municipal, non-profit and co-operative sector housing system.

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy recognizes the importance of protecting these existing public housing assets. The County will continue to invest in preserving existing housing assets and seek out opportunities to access funding for capital repairs and building improvements to increase accessibility and energy efficiency. Additionally, where prudent to do so, the County will maximize housing stock as leverage for building more, newer housing stock elsewhere in the County.

3.2 Non-Profit Housing Corporations and Housing Co-operatives

The County of Simcoe will continue to work closely with local non-profit and cooperative housing providers to support these mandated housing providers in effective management of their housing communities. Support includes: participation in housing provider meetings, attendance at board meetings, operational reviews and compliance audits, providing educational resources and training, including capacity building and succession

planning, planning for end of operating agreements and mortgages, and the provision of loans for capital repairs. Mortgage maturation dates on 39% of the buildings within the Social Housing portfolio will be realized by 2024. As Operating Agreements end and mortgages are paid off on existing social housing stock this may present an opportunity for housing providers to leverage their assets for capital repairs and/or redevelopment. It may also lead to a decrease in the number of RGI units across the social housing portfolio.

In 2015, the County introduced a Capital Repair Loan process to assist mandated social housing providers with urgent capital repairs, as a supplement to Federal/ Provincial funds where there are shortfalls and urgent needs. This helps to address community housing infrastructure. By the end of 2018, a total of \$5.8 million had been committed to providers since the establishment of the program in 2015.

Under the National Housing Strategy, the Federal government is creating a Community Housing Transformation Centre and Sector Transformation Fund to provide technical assistance and tools to increase the capacity of community housing providers, together with financial resources to support community housing providers who are exploring new and more efficient business models.

The ongoing development of the Province's Community Housing Renewal Strategy will also be an important cornerstone to the work of repairing, sustaining, and growing this sector.



3.3 Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability

The County maintains a commitment to energy conservation and efficiency and will continue to drive energy reduction and conservation activities through the County's sustainable operations teams to lower greenhouse gas emissions and utility costs. The County will also continue to participate in available Ministry Infrastructure programs for building improvements and efficiency upgrades of existing buildings in the community housing portfolio.

The Simcoe County Housing Corporation's (SCHC) Development and Operational Plan builds in best practices for designing SCHC facilities for energy efficiency and lower operational costs, acknowledging the significant annual savings that can be realized when implementing energy efficient systems and construction methods in new builds. Furthermore, the County facilitates sustainable improvements to the non-profit and co-operative community housing stock through Engineering support.

MOVING FORWARD IN HOUSING OUR FUTURE (2019 - 2024)

See Implementation Plan: Phase 2, pages 10-11, for more information on progress achieved to-date, and action steps to be undertaken throughout 2018-2020, and the duration of the Strategy.



STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

Plan for the Public Good

Desired Outcome: Municipalities adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the County of Simcoe.

4.1 Municipal Liaison Group

The County of Simcoe together with its municipal partners formed a Municipal Liaison Group. This group meets quarterly to discuss and identify opportunities and best practices to promote affordable housing at the local level. Planning staff and other representatives from the County of Simcoe, Cities of Barrie and Orillia, and all 16 member municipalities share information and case studies on topics such as Community Improvement Plans (CIPs), promotion of Secondary Suites to homeowners, affordable urban design, municipal planning and financial tools for incentivising private development of affordable housing, data collection and tracking of affordable housing targets, and urban and rural housing. Updates are also shared from members who have attended conferences and forums, such as the Regional Planning Commission of Ontario (RPCO), or the Housing and Homelessness Data Forum hosted by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH).

The Municipal Liaison Group provides the opportunity for the members to learn from one another, identify creative ideas, and share insights on successful projects. As Local Municipal Official Plans are being updated to bring them into conformity with Provincial Policies and the County's Official Plan, they will be reviewed for the inclusion of policies that support affordable housing.

4.2 The Private Market

The County recognizes the important role of the private sector, as the largest provider of housing, in the provision of a mix and range of affordable housing, including affordable rental and ownership, to meet the needs of the community.

The County maintains representation from the private sector on its Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, and will continue to engage with developers/builders, and landlords/property managers to support the development of affordable housing, including access to Federal/Provincial capital and operating funds and programs.

Further, the Province's Housing Supply Action Plan aims to stimulate the supply of housing in general, as well as affordable and rental housing, for example by spreading the cost of development charges for rental projects over a number of years post occupancy.

The County, as Service Manager, encourages land use planning and financial tools that encourage and support development of affordable housing. Best practices will continue to be promoted to municipalities through the Municipal Liaison Group.



4.3 Municipal Housing Tools and Incentives Best Practices Information Sheet

The County has developed a Municipal Housing Tools and Incentives Best Practices Information Sheet, intended to encourage municipal levels of government within the County to partner with the private and non-for-profit sectors in the creation of new affordable rental housing. Partner municipalities can implement the tools and incentives identified in the optimal standard, or variations of the tools and incentives that would work best in their respective areas.

The optimal standard includes:

- 100% Development Charge Relief (for example a grant for development charges with a commitment of a minimum of 10 years affordable housing)
- 100% Property Tax Incentives (for example exemption of property taxes as long as affordable housing is maintained)
- 100% Waived Planning and Building Fees
- Reduced/Waived Parkland Dedication Requirements
- Reduced Parking Requirements (where required)
- Dedicated Project Manager/Fast Track Approval System
- Pre-zoned Areas (Flexible Zoning)
- Surplus Land (Pre-Approved)
- Economical Built Forms (smaller types of residential units and lot sizes)
- Capital Funding (for example a forgivable loan for providing affordable housing for a defined period of time)
- Promotion of Inclusionary Zoning

The County of Simcoe also provides development charges and property tax incentives for affordable housing development.

4.4 Building Complete Communities

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 speaks to the development of “complete communities” which include the provision of public service facilities, along with other elements such as the provision of convenient access to most of the necessities of daily living for residents including jobs, local stores and services (i.e. schools, health/dental, banking), and a full range of housing and transportation options to accommodate a range of incomes and household sizes. To accommodate forecasted growth, the Province has identified the Primary Settlement Areas in the County, exclusive of Barrie and Orillia, as Alcona, Alliston, Bradford, Collingwood, Midland and Penetanguishene.

Spanning close to 5,000 square kilometres of territory in Ontario’s Greater Golden Horseshoe, Simcoe County comprises both rural and urban areas. Although Primary Settlement Areas have been identified for accommodating population growth, the Strategy also recognizes the importance of ensuring affordable housing options are available throughout the County, including rural areas, for example through the creation of secondary suites and the provision of rent supplements.

4.5 Transit

In 2017, the County of Simcoe established a Simcoe County Transit Plan to provide a network of transit connections that offer affordable rates and that will link transit systems across communities throughout the region. The program will phase-in intra-municipal routes and facilitate easier inter-regional or commuter travel. The first route opened in the summer of 2018 between Midland/Penetanguishene and Barrie. The ridership on the first route is about 25% above projections. Feedback has been positive: many riders are indicating that the bus service was overdue and now making a positive impact to their lives. The County of Simcoe will be implementing three more routes in August 2019. One route will be from Collingwood to Wasaga Beach, another from Wasaga Beach to Stayner, Angus and Barrie, another from Barrie to Oro-Medonte and Orillia. Accessible, affordable transportation is an important aspect of inclusive communities, connecting people to key service, education and labour hubs across the region, and increasing access to affordable housing options.



4.6 Active Transportation

Active transportation (AT) refers to any form of human-powered transportation including walking, cycling, using a wheelchair, in-line skating or skateboarding. AT facilities typically include sidewalks, shared space on roadways, bicycle lanes, paved shoulders, cycle tracks and trails. Active transportation can be integrated into daily activities and can be generally grouped into one of the following categories:

- **Active Commuting:** trips to and from work or school;
- **Active Workplace Travel:** trips during working hours such as using an active mode of travel to and from a meeting;
- **Active Destination-Oriented Trips:** trips to visit friends, going to the library, attending a sporting event, etc.; and
- **Active Recreation:** for fitness or recreation.

The County of Simcoe completed a Transportation Master Plan Update in 2013, which acknowledged an active transportation network can build upon the existing extensive trail network and plans already present within Simcoe County. By identifying missing links and recommending additional candidate routes and infrastructure, particularly within or between urban areas in the County, this network can support and encourage active transportation for all purposes throughout Simcoe County, including the development of complete communities.

Innovative Approaches to Affordable Housing

To further encourage a mix of housing types, tenures, and densities to meet the needs of current and future residents, the County also believes in exploring innovative approaches to affordable housing.

The County hosted an Affordable Housing Innovations Forum in 2017, for municipal representatives, the general public and community stakeholders. After receiving a number of presentations from those with experience in innovative approaches to financing for affordable housing development, tiny houses, conversions of existing assets to affordable housing, shipping-container built housing, modular/pre-manufactured housing, and lane-way infill housing, the County, in conjunction with Redwood Park Communities and the David Busby Street Centre, moved forward with a motel conversion pilot project that will create 18-units earmarked as housing for those who have experienced chronic homelessness.

The County of Simcoe also approved the use of municipally-funded rent supplements within rooming houses, where permitted by zoning by-laws, and in alignment with program criteria, thus expanding the reach of rent supplements across the housing continuum.

Increase Education for and About Affordable Housing

As part of the Strategy, there is a commitment to increase education for, and about, affordable housing; proactively addressing Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, with developers, landlords and the general public. Delivery methods for this information include municipal deputations, public open houses for new Simcoe County Housing Corporation affordable housing developments, annual report cards, and media relations efforts from elected officials and County staff.



MOVING FORWARD IN HOUSING OUR FUTURE (2019 - 2024)

See Implementation Plan: Phase 2, pages 12-13, for more information on progress achieved to-date, and action steps to be undertaken throughout 2018-2020, and the duration of the Strategy.



STRATEGIC THEME FIVE

Create an integrated service model for housing and supports

Desired Outcome: People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.

5.1 Improving Data on Incidence and Scope

Accurate data is required for policy decisions and program improvements. In its original Strategy, the County identified a number of opportunities for improving data collection and has since undertaken, or began exploration of, a number of methods for improving data on incidence and scope.

The County of Simcoe successfully completed a homeless enumeration in the spring of 2018. The 2018 Homeless Enumeration addresses activities within the 10-Year Strategy, including:

- Improving data on the incidence, scope and depth of homelessness and housing instability.
- Exploring opportunities for integrated technologies like the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) that will provide monitoring tools for accountability for an integrated housing and homelessness service model.

HIFIS is being implemented across the Homelessness Services and Supports System in 2019. This and other data will also assist the County and its community partners in better measuring and monitoring their success in addressing the housing and support needs of homeless residents, and measuring improvements in access to housing and retention across the various service provider types and regions of the County.

5.2 Enhanced Coordination with Other Community Services

The County of Simcoe recognizes the importance of working with partners across service systems to improve coordination and client access to housing and homelessness prevention services. The County has already begun collaborating with the Health Services in the area. This collaboration includes implementation of a Seniors at Home program targeted at Alternative Level of Care clients, targeting rent supplements to clients of mental health services, discussing best practices for service planning and delivery, exploring funding alignments and opportunities for collaboration and joint-delivery, as well as working together to track targets related to the County's annual Housing Our Future report cards.

Continued engagement and co-ordination with community partners in the Homelessness Prevention, Health and Corrections sectors as well as the Federal government and Provincial ministries, such as the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and Ministry of Health, will be necessary in better understanding the needs of specific sub-populations, sharing of best practices and data, identifying opportunities for collaboration, and improving outcomes for clients by ensuring they receive timely access to the most appropriate housing and supports.



5.3 People-Centered Program and Service Delivery

Coordinate Access and Common Assessment across Service Providers

To be truly effective in meeting the housing needs of residents, it is essential that homeless and precariously housed individuals and families have a clear idea of how to quickly access services to meet their immediate needs. Together with its community partners, the County has introduced a common-assessment tool, the Vulnerability Index- Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT), to create a standardized method for assisting an individual or family in accessing the best services to meet their immediate needs. This is being implemented in conjunction with a Housing First program administered by Empower Simcoe.

Furthermore, under the umbrella of Reaching Home, the Federal

Homelessness Strategy, a system of Co-ordinated Access to services for those experiencing homelessness is being developed in the County over the next few years, with the oversight of both Community and Indigenous advisory boards. A Co-ordinated Access system is a community-wide strategy to help prevent homelessness and match individuals and families experiencing homelessness to housing and support resources. Common tools for the Coordinated Access System that have been developed include a common intake and a common consent form.

5.4 Community Service Hubs/ Integration

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy commits to improve the organization of services in community, including through

hubs and satellites, to expand services County-wide rather than expecting people to find their way to services.

Over the past few years, the County has allocated funding to support the development and coordination of homelessness hub projects in Barrie, Orillia, and Midland.

Opportunities for hub services are also considered in new affordable housing developments by Simcoe County Housing Corporation. For example, the new development of 147 units in Collingwood includes ground floor space for Ontario Works, Child Care Fee Subsidy, and Simcoe County District School Board Adult Learning, as well as a housing resource office for Empower Simcoe, including housing first programming.

Hub approaches to integrated service delivery will continue to be explored across the County.

MOVING FORWARD IN HOUSING OUR FUTURE (2019 - 2024)

See Implementation Plan: Phase 2, pages 14-16, for more information on progress achieved to-date, and action steps to be undertaken throughout 2018-2020, and the duration of the Strategy.



Conclusion

During the first five years of the Strategy 1,288 units of affordable housing have been created for low-to-moderate-income households through new development, rent supplements/housing allowances, home ownership assistance, and secondary suites, representing 48% of the 10-year target. Low-income households have primarily been assisted through the 523 rent supplements and housing allowances that have been provided during this period. As at August, 2019, of the 170 participants in the Housing First program, 131 or 77% were housed.

A further 287 units will be completed by Simcoe County Housing Corporation over the next couple of years at projects in Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, and Victoria Harbour. These projects benefit from Federal/Provincial funding, local Municipal incentives and significant investments by the County of Simcoe. The Province has released its Community Housing Renewal Strategy as well as a Housing Action Plan. There is further Federal/Provincial funding over the next three years under the Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI) and the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI). The National Housing Strategy continues to provide financing for affordable housing.

The County will continue to work through the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, the Municipal Liaison Group, and with its Community Partners, in implementing Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy and this Update 2019, which itself aligns with the Federal and Provincial frameworks, towards the goal of adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents.

HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing
and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

Implementation Plan - Phase 2



2018

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Background

In 2010, the Province launched the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) to better meet the housing needs of Ontarians, in partnership with service managers and municipalities.

Service managers were required to prepare local housing and homelessness plans that address matters of provincial interest, and that are consistent with policy statements issued under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* (HSA).

As the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for this region, the County of Simcoe—together with its municipal and community partners, released *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy* (Strategy), approved by County Council in 2014.

The Province updated its LTAHS in 2016, to reflect the government's priorities related to affordable housing in alignment with new achievements like the *Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative* (CHPI), Poverty Reduction Strategy, and provincial goal of ending homelessness by 2025.

This updated policy statement took effect on July 1, 2016. Service Managers' housing and homelessness plans will be required to be consistent with the new policy statement by January 1, 2019.

In planning for Implementation—Phase 2 of *Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy*, work occurring between 2018-2020 will reflect these updated policy directives; focusing on:

- Stimulating an appropriate and sustainable supply of housing by using a range of land use planning and municipal finance tools to build more affordable market housing
- Delivering people-centred, efficient housing programs through a modernized framework for social housing, aligned with the government's focus on poverty reduction
- Enhancing housing options for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking
- Collaborating with Indigenous organizations to address the unique housing challenges and needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples
- Advancing our long-term goal of ending homelessness, including measuring progress on chronic homelessness, youth homelessness, homelessness amongst Indigenous peoples and homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions and service systems
- Working with other levels of government to achieve an evidence-informed system, through continued reporting on performance indicators and conducting local enumeration of the homeless population to better understand and meet the needs of our community



Our Strategy at a Glance

Vision: Adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents

The Strategy is focused on providing a range of affordable housing options to meet the diverse and changing needs of County residents:

Homeless | Emergency Shelters | Transitional Housing | Social Housing | Affordable Rental Housing
| Affordable Home Ownership | Market Rental Housing | Market Home Ownership



5 Strategic Themes Summarized



Establish Strong Governance and Leadership

Desired Outcome

Successful implementation of the Strategy is supported by working partnerships with the public and private sectors, and all levels of government.

Key Concepts

Partnerships | Support for the Private Housing Market | Collaboration Amongst all Levels of Government | Tracking, Measurement and Reporting



Achieve Affordable Housing Target

Desired Outcome

Simcoe County residents have access to a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units by 2024.

Key Concepts

Achieving Target | Increasing Supply | Addressing Pressure Points | Supporting Those in Greatest Need | Addressing a Broad Range of Community Needs



Protect Existing Public Assets

Desired Outcome

85% of existing social housing units in the County remain part of the housing stock.

Key Concepts

Protecting Existing Housing Stock | Environmental Sustainability | Non-Profit and Co-operative Social Housing Providers | Capacity Building



Plan for the Public Good

Desired Outcome

All municipalities adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development and transportation modes across the County of Simcoe.

Key Concepts

Supporting Member Municipalities | Encouraging Private Development | Increase Education for and About Affordable Housing



Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports

Desired Outcome

People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing.

Key Concepts

Supporting A Housing First Approach | Goal of Ending Homelessness | Enhanced Coordination with Other Community Services | Improving Data on Incidence and Scope | People-Centred Program and Service Delivery

STRATEGIC THEME ONE

Establish Strong Leadership and Governance

1.1 The County will work in partnership with local municipalities, community agencies, the private sector and other levels of government to implement this Strategy and build upon initiatives already proven to work in Simcoe.

Ongoing

1.2 Establish a Working Group comprised of elected officials, municipal senior staff, and representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to be responsible for leading the implementation.

Short Term

1.3 Actively engage the private sector, to understand the barriers and advocate for changes in regulations and legislation to support the creation of affordable housing.

Ongoing

1.4 Advocate with other levels of government for changes in legislation and regulations that support initiatives and directions of the Strategy; increases in Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates and other poverty reduction initiatives.

Short Term

1.5 Consider establishing an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to increase investment in housing spectrum and comprehensive supports for residents.

Ongoing

1.6 Monitor the implementation of the Strategy. The Working Group and County staff will update targets and recommendations within 5 years of the launch of the Strategy and/or in response to significant policy, program or funding shifts with the potential to impact the implementation of the Strategy.

Ongoing

1.7 Publish annual report cards on the implementation of the Strategy.

Ongoing



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Phase 1 (2014-2017)

WHAT WE'VE DONE

- 1.1** Explored financing opportunities and tools to support the creation of affordable housing; further circulated this information through a Municipal Housing Tools and Incentives Best Practices Information Sheet.
- 1.1** Provided presentations and information to other levels of government on County innovative practices such as Call for Proposals for municipal lands, capital repair loans process, End of Operating Agreements, and municipal tools and incentives to support affordable housing.
- 1.2** Established an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee of 6 municipal and 6 private, public and not for profit representatives to oversee implementation of Our Community 10-Year Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy.
- 1.3** Established partnerships with private developers and homebuilders to increase private involvement in affordable housing development across the County; hosted round tables.
- 1.4** Participated as a Service Manager in providing direction and feedback related to the development of a National Housing Strategy. Contributed to Provincial social assistance modernization. Actively promoted affordable housing to various levels of government through ministerial correspondence, meetings, conferences, and events.
- 1.5** Doubled County budget for development charges rebates for affordable housing from \$100K to \$200K annually. Invested \$6 million in County rent supplements, \$1.5 million in County second suites program. Utilized revolving loan funds for home ownership down payments and second suites/homeowner repair programs.
- 1.6** Developed a tracking and measurement system for capturing measures taken and progress achieved towards the implementation of the strategy.
- 1.7** Developed a communications strategy for annual reporting on the implementation of the plan.

Phase 2 (2018-2020)

WHAT WE'LL DO

- 1.1** Continue scheduled meetings with Local Health Integration Networks to determine intersections and potential opportunities in service delivery.
- 1.1** Contribute to collective housing sector knowledge through the development of affordable housing best practices, innovative approaches, and/or combined efforts. For example, work with other Service Managers, the Province, Housing Services Corporation, OMSSA, ONPHA, etc. to (1) build sector knowledge on leveraging tools, financing, land acquisition, etc., (2) identify financial efficiencies through economies of scale, (3) identify innovative financial tools, (4) host and/or participate in collaborative learning opportunities to share knowledge on the above activities.
- 1.3** Continue to engage with community partners from public, private, non-profit sectors, and community groups, in respect of increasing affordable housing options and addressing barriers to affordable housing.
- 1.4** Continue to work with other levels of government, social service agencies, and community partners to support poverty reduction initiatives.
- 1.6** Update Our Community 10-Year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy to ensure alignment with provincial interests as outlined in Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy Update.
- 1.6** Expand tracking and measurement systems, where possible, as new reporting partnerships and data sources become available.

Ongoing

WHAT WE'LL KEEP DOING

- 1.1** Pursue opportunities to partner with all levels of government, local municipalities, community agencies and private partners where possible to increase awareness.
- 1.1** Continue to share County innovative practices with other levels of government to support the creation of affordable housing.
- 1.1** Demonstrate support for the work of local municipalities, community agencies and private sector by ensuring County staff and/or AHAC members' participation in partner hosted committees and events.
- 1.3** Together with member municipalities, work to support the role of the private sector through use of informed best practices and application of available land-use planning and financial tools, where applicable.
- 1.4** Participate in advocacy efforts that work to reduce barriers and encourage changes in regulations that support the creation of affordable housing.
- 1.6** Continue research and analysis of current housing market trends, policies, and funding opportunities with the potential to impact the Strategy and/or its targets.
- 1.7** Publish annual report cards on the implementation of the Strategy.



STRATEGIC THEME TWO

Achieve Affordable Housing Target

2.1 Between January 1, 2014 and January 1, 2024, facilitate the creation of a minimum of 2,685 units of affordable housing through new development, acquisition, renovation and/or rent supplements, with a minimum of 198 of the units being affordable owned dwellings.

Long term

2.2 Optimize access to, and use of, rent supplements and/or other housing allowance assistance options as an efficient way to increase affordability.

Ongoing

2.3 Focus on supporting individuals and families in greatest housing need. Initiatives that increase affordable rental housing or help households access existing rental housing should focus first on renter households at the 40th income percentile or less.

Ongoing

2.4 Initiate a Sub-Committee to explore the creation of culturally appropriate off-reserve Aboriginal housing, with a goal of creating a minimum of 66 units of affordable home ownership dwellings specifically for off-reserve persons – included in minimum target of 2,685 units.

Short term

2.5 The County, with its community partners, should ensure that the housing and support needs of youth are incorporated into future investments and initiatives. Housing with supports has proven to be an effective strategy for ending youth homelessness.

Short term

2.6 Emphasize access to, and development of, primarily one and two bedroom units to address affordable housing pressure points and to improve the range of options available to single individuals and single-parent families who are homeless.

Ongoing

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Phase 1 (2014-2017)

WHAT WE'VE DONE

2.1 Between January 2014 and September 2017 created **792***/895 units through new development, secondary suites, affordable homeownership and rent supplements.
*as of Q3

2.1 Established County funded \$1.5 million second suites program.

2.1 Completed 54 unit addition to Simcoe County Housing Corporation property at Brooks St., Barrie.

2.1 Approved and began work on two major Simcoe County Housing Corporation development projects, 147 units in Collingwood, 99 units in Wasaga Beach.

2.1 Held an Innovations Forum to look at built forms and financing. As a result approved funding to purchase and renovate a Pilot motel conversion project in Barrie, in partnership with a not for profit group.

2.1 Approved \$2 million in 2018 for new rental in smaller rural development areas, with intent to double the investment in 2019.

2.2 Established County-funded \$6 million rent supplement program. Invested \$2.8million in federal/provincial funds into rent supplements and housing allowances.

2.3 Implemented process to allocate IAHE Year-2 Rent Supplements in partnership with LHIN-funded mental health agencies as pilot Housing First Model.

2.3 Developed a framework for allowing allocations of municipally-funded rent supplements in rooming houses to support those individuals experiencing deeper need and/or more complex issues.

2.4 Supported affordable homeownership dwellings specifically for off-reserve individuals and families through specified targets under Affordable Homeownership Program funding allocations.

2.6 Prioritized bachelor, one and two bed units in 2016 Request For Proposals for new rental development. Simcoe County Housing Corporation Redevelopment Plan emphasizes bachelors and one bedroom units. Coordinated with local municipalities to track and monitor secondary suites created outside of government funding.

Phase 2 (2018-2020)

WHAT WE'LL DO

2.1 Between January 2018 and December 2020 create an additional 895 units, through new development, acquisition, renovations, secondary suites, affordable homeownership and/or rent supplements.

2.1 Increase County funded second suites, continue to implement County funded rent supplements, fund Simcoe County Housing Corporation developments, continue to create affordable housing through existing federal/provincial programs, administer and allocate new federal/provincial funds for affordable housing as they become available. Collaborate with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), where possible, to coordinate housing and homelessness planning efforts, share information and incorporate tracking of LHIN-funded services that assist in achieving targets outlined in the Strategy.

2.1 Progress on completion of affordable housing projects approved and carried over from Phase 1 (2014-2017) of the Strategy.

2.1 Develop specialized strategies to support rural municipalities in achieving targets and increasing affordable housing in rural communities.

2.1 Continue to support innovative approaches to affordable housing through future consideration of funding for viable projects, where deemed applicable.

2.2 Explore the application of a Portable Housing Benefit as it could be applied within the context of Simcoe County.

2.3 Effectively utilize County and Home for Good funding for a Motel Conversion Pilot Project in Barrie and a supportive housing project in Orillia.

2.4 Increase promotion of available off-reserve affordable housing programs to local indigenous service providers in an effort to increase uptake of available funding by the indigenous community.

2.5 Work with OAHs to promote like programs and leverage efforts to enhance opportunities for indigenous housing providers.

2.6 Convene youth service providers to develop a youth specific, local approach to ending youth homelessness in Simcoe County, Explore national programs such as A Way Home to identify opportunities within Simcoe County.

2.6 Explore future development opportunities to be “shovel” ready to create additional affordable housing units as new Federal-Provincial funding is made available.

2.6 Prepare an analysis regarding affordability of secondary suites created without government assistance, including an assessment of assumptions related to affordability.

Ongoing

WHAT WE'LL KEEP DOING

2.1 Address core need for individuals and families by focusing on deeper affordability for those on lower income, primarily through rent supplements.

2.1 Continue to explore partnerships and funding opportunities to create affordable housing.

2.1 Continue efforts to leverage funding through cross-ministerial initiatives with MOHLTC and MCSS to achieve supportive housing targets, including review of best practices on supportive housing.

2.1 Maximize provincial and federal funding towards achieving the targets contained within the Strategy.

2.1 Establish contact with non-County funded agencies and municipalities to track affordable housing units that may be created by these entities for inclusion in the County target tracking.

2.3 Continue to provide development charges and property tax incentives for affordable housing development.

2.3 Engage and/or consult, as needed, with service providers and various sub-populations with relation to creating units and/or providing supports suitable to a variety of needs, including: the needs of indigenous persons, persons experience chronic homelessness, youth, seniors, single-parent families, and victims of domestic violence, victims of human trafficking, accessibility needs, and mental health and addictions needs.

STRATEGIC THEME THREE

Protect Existing Public Assets

- 3.1** Adaptively reuse under-used housing resources, including a review of over housing situations in current Rent-Geared-to-Income units in County-owned and Non-Profit Housing.

Medium term

- 3.2** Maintain and preserve existing housing assets and seize opportunities to renovate and improve other housing stock for the purpose of affordable housing.

Long term

- 3.3** Create a Sub-Committee to review the impact of the end of operating agreements on social housing stock and make recommendations to the County Council on managing this transition.

Short term

- 3.4** Where prudent to do so, maximize profit of existing housing stock as leverage for building more, newer housing stock elsewhere in the County.

Long term



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Phase 1 (2014-2017)

WHAT WE'VE DONE

- 3.1** Approved SCHC development and redevelopment plan will address scattered units in Barrie; addressing over housing.
- 3.2** Created an open and transparent capital repair loan process for non-profit social housing providers to make essential capital repairs.
- 3.2** Reduced fuel costs by 30% and saved \$29,000 in rebates through completion of energy efficiency capital upgrades.
- 3.3** Reviewed the impact of the end of operating agreements on social housing stock and made recommendations to County Council on managing this transition.
- 3.3** Established a Steering Committee to analyze the impact of end of operating agreements/mortgages in social housing; including capital repair projections to 2031 and opportunities to learn innovative approaches and best practices from other jurisdictions.
- 3.4** Provided accurate capital forecasting and planning for long-term business plan.
- 3.4** Identified unique opportunities to leverage external capital assets for repurposing as affordable housing.
- 3.4** Initiated a review of Simcoe County Housing Corporation stock with the intent of maximizing assets for the long term provision of social housing.
- 3.4** Approved a formal 10-year SCHC plan to redevelop, sell, acquire as required to maximize the number of units and reduce operational costs—SCHC Re-development Plan approved.

Phase 2 (2018-2020)

WHAT WE'LL DO

- 3.1** Adaptively reuse under-used housing resources, including a review of over housing situations in current Rent-Geared-to-Income units in County-owned and Non-Profit Housing.
- 3.1** Explore options for moving persons over housed in RGI units to rent supplements in order to assist them in finding more appropriate accommodations for their needs; consider impact on the Centralized Waitlist.
- 3.2** Continue assisting mandated social housing providers with urgent capital repairs through a capital repair loan process.
- 3.2** Participate in Ministry infrastructure programs for building improvements and efficiency upgrades of existing buildings.
- 3.3** Continue working with social housing providers to track the continuation of affordable housing amidst the expiration of End of Operating Agreements.
- 3.4** Consolidate SCHC operations and leverage existing assets in order to increase the supply of affordable units.

Ongoing

WHAT WE'LL KEEP DOING

- 3.1** Ensure responsible stewardship of housing assets and resources through continued long-term planning for the promotion, provision, and protection of a range of affordable housing options.
- 3.2** Maintain and preserve existing housing assets and seize opportunities to renovate and improve other housing stock for the purpose of affordable housing.
- 3.2** Continue to provide supports to non-profit and co-operative housing providers to assist them in effective management of their housing communities.
- 3.2** Continue to drive energy reduction and conservation activities through County's sustainable operations teams to lower Green House emissions and utility costs.
- 3.2** Conduct SCHC building modernization projects to improve accessibility and extend building useful life.
- 3.4** Where prudent to do so, maximize profit of existing housing stock as leverage for building more, newer housing stock elsewhere in the County.
- 3.4** Continue to investigate surplus lands or strategic real estate purchases that could be utilized for development of affordable housing.

STRATEGIC THEME FOUR

Plan for the Public Good

- 4.1** Amend local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents.

Short term

- 4.2** Create a private developer and homebuilder roundtable to increase private involvement in affordable housing development across the County.

Short term

- 4.3** All municipalities will be encouraged to adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the Strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the County.

Medium term

- 4.4** The County should make a clear commitment to the municipalities as to the financial tools it will support and the circumstances under which it will also waive and/or defer fees or taxes to facilitate the development of affordable housing.

Short term

- 4.5** The County will continue to work with local municipalities to support policies and infrastructures for transportation modes that support access to services, amenities and employment opportunities for those living in precarious, rental, subsidized and/or low income neighbourhoods where substandard housing may exist.

Ongoing

- 4.6** Increase education for, and about, affordable housing. Be proactive in addressing Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, with developers, landlords, and the general public.

Ongoing



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Phase 1 (2014-2017)

WHAT WE'VE DONE

- 4.1** Liaised with our local municipalities to encourage planning and policy tools that support the creation of affordable housing and the achievement of mutually agreeable affordable housing and homelessness prevention targets. Developed and circulated a Council Approved Municipal Housing Tools and Incentives Best Practices Information Sheet. Encouraged the amendment of local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents.
- 4.2** Inclusion of private sector representatives on the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee. Consultations with Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) and Landlords.
- 4.4** Approved increase in annual budget from \$100K to \$200K annually for the provision of development charge rebates.
- 4.6** Facilitated education and awareness to champion affordable housing and address barriers such as NIMBY-ism through multiple media interviews, and presentations.
- 4.6** Staff participated in a number of media interviews, discussion panels, and presentations to increase awareness of the need for affordable housing, and to promote the Strategy.
- 4.5** Developed a Regional Transit Plan for Simcoe County.

Phase 2 (2018-2020)

WHAT WE'LL DO

- 4.1** All municipalities will be encouraged to adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the Strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the county.
- 4.1** Work with all levels of government to bring the County and local municipal official plans into conformity with the Growth Plan 2017 and Provincial Policy Statement 2014.
- 4.2** Continue to consult with BILD.
- 4.3** Continue to host quarterly Municipal Liaison Group meetings to further investigate ways to improve affordable housing outcomes at the local municipal level, and best practices for promoting and incentivising the development of affordable housing.
- 4.4** Continue to provide development charges and property tax incentives for affordable housing development.
- 4.5** Continue implementation of Transit Plan.
- 4.5** Promote the use of Community Improvement Plans in municipalities to increase the supply of rental housing and encourage redevelopment opportunities that include affordable units.
- 4.5** Conduct further consultation and research regarding the role of temporary housing as an alternative option that supports balance, secondary to a Housing First Approach, and report to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee regarding challenges and opportunities present at local shelters, transitional housing, etc.

Ongoing

WHAT WE'LL KEEP DOING

- 4.1** Amend local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents.
- 4.4** Continue to investigate surplus lands or strategic real estate purchases that could be utilized for development of affordable housing.
- 4.5** The County will continue to work with local municipalities to support policies and infrastructures for transportation modes that support access to services, amenities and employment opportunities for those living in precarious, rental, subsidized and/or low income neighborhoods where substandard housing may exist.
- 4.6** Increase education for, and about, affordable housing. Be proactive in addressing Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, with developers, landlords, and the general public.
- 4.5** Continue implementation of Transit Plan.

STRATEGIC THEME FIVE

Create an integrated service model for housing and supports

5.1 Shift from emergency and shorter-term solutions, to housing with supports by professionalized staff, which is the only way to end homelessness.

Ongoing

5.2 Improve data on the incidence, scope and depth of homelessness and housing instability. Accurate data is required for policy decisions and program enhancements.

Medium term

5.3 Explore opportunities for integrated technologies like the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) which will provide monitoring tools for accountability for an integrated housing and homelessness service model.

Medium term

5.4 Focus investment on those residents with longer homelessness and more complex issues.

Short term

5.5 Make necessary changes in the existing services, re-profiling funding as necessary, to focus on additional supports to people once housed to prevent future homelessness, including improving awareness of supports available for landlords and tenants.

Short term

5.6 Improve the organization of services in community, including through hubs and satellites, to expand services County-wide rather than expecting people to find their way to services.

Medium term

5.7 Remove unnecessary barriers by supporting harm reduction approaches and strategies to funded homeless services.

Short term

5.8 Facilitate strategic, integrated partnerships and service delivery between the homeless, health and corrections sectors.

Medium term



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Phase 1 (2014-2017)

WHAT WE'VE DONE

5.1 Addressed disparities across the region including rural areas for at-risk or homeless households by investing in social and health related partnerships (such as home-based mental health services) to enhance standard supports, housing stability and quality of life.

5.1 Invested in a County-wide Rapid Re-Housing pilot program that builds upon landlord relations and best practice approaches for housing stability outcomes.

5.2 Investigated, recommended and implemented the Homelessness Individual and Family Information System (HIFIS 4) to support integrated, system-wide improvements to data knowledge on housing stability, and the incidence and depth of homelessness in the region.

5.2 Utilized information and resources from Registry Week enumeration to better understand the prevalence and characteristics of episodic and longer-term homeless persons within the community.

5.3 Coordinate, plan and integrate service delivery across multiple agencies by implementing HIFIS 4 real-time technology into the community sector.

5.4 Focused investment on those residents with longer homelessness and more complex issues.

5.4 Designed and implemented housing program models that support Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing approaches to support moderate to high level housing acuity needs of those at risk or homeless.

5.4 Supported community development innovations as outlined in **Strategic Opportunity 2.5** that support Housing with Supports investments to end youth homelessness.

5.5 Began making necessary changes in the existing services, re-profiling funding as necessary, to focus on additional supports to people once housed to prevent future homelessness, including improving awareness of supports available for landlords and tenants.

5.6 Leveraged system-wide funding allocations to better align community housing retention and housing stability activities that support homelessness prevention outcomes that maximize service delivery models for specific sub-populations identified in the strategy.

5.6 Built partnership capacity with new social innovations ideas (such as with the Phase II Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, Barrie Pathways to End Homelessness, SCATEH and Ontario 211 Services) to improve the organization and access to services that improve outcomes to end homelessness.

5.6 Made improvements to accessibility and organization of services through the development of hub models in the homelessness sector.

5.7 Removed unnecessary barriers by supporting harm reduction approaches and strategies to funded homeless services.

5.8 Increased Service Provider training and development to address housing acuity needs for individuals and families who are at risk or homeless. (Examples include: SPDAT, housing case management and system-design training.)

5.8 Engaged and promoted Our Community Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy to key community partners and encourage partnerships, integration and strategic alignment.

Phase 2 (2018-2020)

WHAT WE'LL DO

5.1 Continue to invest using CHPI rent supplement to improve housing stability outcomes for moderate to high acuity households; Work with emergency shelters and transitional housing providers to transition to a housing-focussed approach to service delivery. Note: this is consistent with our upcoming 'How to Be an Awesome Housing-Focused Shelter' event on February 5.

5.1 Implement programs: Seniors to Home, and Home for Good.

5.2 Continue to improve data on the incidence, scope and depth of homelessness and housing instability.

5.2 Operationalize HIFIS 4 with Housing First program shelters and other CHPI related services and programs.

5.2 Undertake a local homeless enumeration

count to support prevalence and rate of episodic and long-term homelessness with the community (2018 count).

5.3 Explore opportunities for integrated technologies like the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) which will provide monitoring tools for accountability for an integrated housing and homelessness service model.

5.4 Convene youth service providers to develop a youth specific, local approach to ending youth homelessness in Simcoe County, Explore national programs such as A Way Home to identify opportunities within Simcoe County.

5.5 Implement CHPI Housing First Program through one regional service provider to support moderate to high level housing acuity needs.

5.6 Improve the organization of services in

the community, including through hubs and satellites, to expand services County-wide.

5.6 Restructure Housing Resource services for the region.

5.6 Begin to investigate Hub Services in the South Georgian Bay area.

5.6 Communicate to general public regarding the transition from Housing Resource Centres to a regional Housing First Team.

5.8 Facilitate strategic, integrated partnerships and service delivery between the homeless, health and corrections sectors.

5.8 Engage key community partners with information regarding updates to the Provincial LTAHS and any updates to Our Community Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Ongoing

WHAT WE'LL KEEP DOING

5.1 Shift from emergency and shorter-term solutions, to housing with supports by professionalized staff, which is the only way to end homelessness.

5.1 Continue to engage with homeless planning directives around the four provincial homelessness priority groups.

5.1 Ensure local homelessness planning priorities are consistent with provincial legislation and directives. This includes Ontario's Supportive Housing Framework.

5.2 Undertake local homeless enumeration count every 2 years to support prevalence and rate of episodic and long-term homelessness with the community (2020 count).

5.2 Work collaboratively with the Ministry of Housing and Homelessness Data working groups.

5.4 Work closely with Indigenous communities in the area of poverty/homelessness and housing.

5.4 Engage with youth homelessness unmet needs and work at a systems level to build capacity and access to housing options.

5.4 Continue to fund community-based homeless agencies through the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) and other municipal contributions.

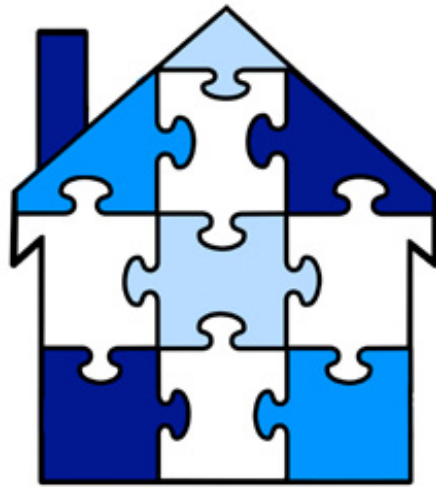
5.6 Continue to advance Housing Resource services and CHPI Housing First program to meet housing stability outcomes.

5.7 Work locally and with the province on poverty reduction priorities and strategies.

5.8 Continue to support and align necessary partnerships and resources.

5.8 Continue to engage and promote Our Community Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy to key community partners and encourage partnerships, integration and strategic alignment.

5.8 Continue to participate on inter-ministerial working groups to improve approaches to service delivery integration.



HOUSING OUR FUTURE

Our Community 10-year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy

Summary of Strategic Opportunities and Priority Actions



02-20-2014



Our Community 10-year Affordable Housing and Homelessness Prevention Strategy



VISION

Adequate, appropriate and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents.

MISSION

To promote, provide and protect a range of housing options throughout the County of Simcoe.

WE VALUE...

- Access to housing options and necessary supports throughout the life cycle.
- Diversity in our housing stock, ensuring variety of tenure, affordability, style, and proximity to amenities.
- Housing as a vehicle for improved health, community vitality, civic engagement, economic prosperity and social sustainability.
- Collaboration amongst levels of government, community partners and systems, recognizing that the need for safe, affordable, healthy housing connects all of our mandates as we strive for people-centered solutions.
- Support for the critical role of the private sector in the creation of housing stock.
- Social sustainability and inclusivity for all local residents, regardless of economics and tremendous population growth.
- Financial stewardship in maintaining existing government-assisted housing, investing in additional affordable housing, and helping people move from homelessness into housing.

The table that follows provides the strategic opportunities and priority activities required to meet the vision of achieving adequate, appropriate, and affordable housing for all Simcoe County residents. Anticipated timelines have been identified for each priority activity:



- Ongoing refers to activities that start at the beginning of the Strategy and continue throughout the life of the Strategy
- Short refers to the first 3 years
- Medium refers to years 4 to 7
- Long refers to years 8 through 10

Strategic Opportunities and Priority Activities

Anticipated
Timeline

1. Establish strong leadership and governance.

1.1	The County will work in partnership with local municipalities, community agencies, the private sector and other levels of government to implement this Strategy and build upon initiatives already proven to work in Simcoe.	Ongoing
1.2	Establish a Working Group comprised of elected officials, municipal senior staff, and representatives from the public, private, and non-profit sectors to be responsible for leading the implementation.	Short
1.3	Actively engage the private sector, to understand the barriers and advocate for changes in regulations and legislation to support the creation of affordable housing.	Ongoing
1.4	Advocate with other levels of government for changes in legislation and regulations that support initiatives and directions of the Strategy; increases in Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates and other poverty reduction initiatives.	Short
1.5	Consider establishing an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to increase investment in housing spectrum and comprehensive supports for residents.	Ongoing
1.6	Monitor the implementation of the Strategy. The Working Group and County staff will update targets and recommendations within 5 years of the launch of the Strategy and/or in response to significant policy, program or funding shifts with the potential to impact the implementation of the Strategy.	Ongoing
1.7	Publish annual report cards on the implementation of the Strategy.	Ongoing

2. Achieve affordable housing target

2.1	Between January 1 2014 and January 1 2024, facilitate the creation of a minimum of 2,685 units of affordable housing through new development, acquisition, renovation and/or rent supplements, with a minimum of 198 of the units being affordable owned dwellings.	Long
2.2	Optimize access to, and use of, rent supplements and/or other housing allowance assistance options as an efficient way to increase affordability.	Ongoing
2.3	Focus on supporting individuals and families in greatest housing need. Initiatives that increase affordable rental housing or help households access existing rental housing should focus first on renter households at the 40th income percentile or less.	Ongoing
2.4	Initiate a Sub-Committee to explore the creation of culturally appropriate off-reserve Aboriginal housing, with a goal of creating a minimum of 66 units of affordable home ownership dwellings specifically for off-reserve persons – included in minimum target of 2,685 units.	Short
2.5	The County, with its community partners, should ensure that the housing and support needs of youth are incorporated into future investments and initiatives. Housing with supports has proven to be an effective strategy for ending youth homelessness.	Short
2.6	Emphasize access to, and development of, primarily one and two bedroom units to address affordable housing pressure points and to improve the range of options available to single individuals and single-parent families who are homeless.	Ongoing

3. Protect Existing Public Assets

3.1	Adaptively reuse under-used housing resources, including a review of overhousing situations in current Rent-Geared-to-Income units in County-owned and Non-Profit Housing.	Medium
3.2	Maintain and preserve existing housing assets and seize opportunities to renovate and improve other housing stock for the purpose of affordable housing.	Long
3.3	Create a Sub-Committee to review the impact of the end of operating agreements on social housing stock and make recommendations to the County Council on managing this transition.	Short
3.4	Where prudent to do so, maximize profit of existing housing stock as leverage for building more, newer housing stock elsewhere in the County.	Long

Strategic Opportunities and Priority Activities

**Anticipated
Timeline**

4. Plan for the public good.

4.1	Amend local Official Plans to include the provision of a full range of housing types, in order to meet diverse needs of residents.	Short
4.2	Create a private developer and homebuilder roundtable to increase private involvement in affordable housing development across the County.	Short
4.3	All municipalities will be encouraged to adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the Strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development across the county.	Medium
4.4	The County should make a clear commitment to the municipalities as to the financial tools it will support and the circumstances under which it will also waive and/or defer fees or taxes to facilitate the development of affordable housing.	Short
4.5	The County will continue to work with local municipalities to support policies and infrastructures for transportation modes that support access to services, amenities and employment opportunities for those living in precarious, rental, subsidized and/or low income neighbourhoods where substandard housing may exist.	Ongoing
4.6	Increase education for, and about, affordable housing. Be proactive in addressing Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, with developers, landlords, and the general public.	Ongoing

5. Create an integrated service model for housing and supports.

5.1	Shift from emergency and shorter-term solutions, to housing with supports by professionalized staff, which is the only way to end homelessness.	Ongoing
5.2	Improve data on the incidence, scope and depth of homelessness and housing instability. Accurate data is required for policy decisions and program enhancements.	Medium
5.3	Explore opportunities for integrated technologies like the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) which will provide monitoring tools for accountability for an integrated housing and homelessness service model.	Medium
5.4	Focus investment on those residents with longer homelessness and more complex issues.	Short
5.5	Make necessary changes in the existing services, re-profiling funding as necessary, to focus on additional supports to people once housed to prevent future homelessness, including improving awareness of supports available for landlords and tenants.	Short
5.6	Improve the organization of services in community, including through hubs and satellites, to expand services County-wide rather than expecting people to find their way to services.	Medium
5.7	Remove unnecessary barriers by supporting harm reduction approaches and strategies to funded homeless services.	Short
5.8	Facilitate strategic, integrated partnerships and service delivery between the homeless, health and corrections sectors.	Medium

APPENDIX 3: Reporting Template

STRATEGIC THEME	OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	MEASURES	TARGETS	ANNUAL PROGRESS/ ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>1. Establish Strong Governance and Leadership</p>	<p>Establish strong leadership and an effective governance structure that can oversee the implementation process related to the 10-Year Strategy</p>	<p>Successful implementation of the strategy is supported by working partnerships with the public, private and community sectors and other levels of government</p>	<p>Ongoing contact /working relationships with public, private and community sector agencies</p>	<p>4-6 AHA meetings 4-6 SCATEH meetings bi-annual contact with BILD Contact with CMHC, MMAH and others as required throughout the year</p>	
<p>2. Achieve Affordable Housing Target</p>	<p>Successful achievement of the affordable housing targets set out within the 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plans.</p>	<p>Simcoe County residents have access to a minimum of 2,685 new affordable housing units by 2024</p>	<p># of households assisted with down payments for affordable home ownership and/or Habitat for Humanity builds</p> <p># of households supported with rent supplements/housing allowances</p> <p># of new affordable rental units created</p> <p># of secondary suites created</p>	<p>2685 new units by 2024</p>	
<p>3. Protect existing public Assets</p>	<p>Ensure protection of existing public housing assets amidst end of operating agreements and aging housing stock.</p>	<p>Majority of social housing units in the County remain part of the housing stock</p> <p>Stock is maintained, repaired and, where possible, upgraded to improve efficiency and sustainability</p>	<p># of units remaining within the social housing portfolio</p> <p># former social housing units that remain affordable</p> <p>Amount of \$ invested in maintaining SCHC assets (year over year)</p> <p>SCHC Energy intensity ekW·hr/ft2</p>	<p>85% of historical units remain in social housing stock</p> <p>80% RIVA system annual projections</p> <p>Reduction of 1% per year</p>	

<p>4. Plan for the Public Good</p>	<p>Strengthen the supply of affordable housing through strengthened partnerships with local municipalities; utilizing a range of policy and planning tools.</p>	<p>All municipalities adopt planning, financial and policy tools highlighted in the strategy to facilitate and promote affordable housing development. Develop transportation modes across the County of Simcoe to support access to services.</p>	<p>specific measures introduced at County and local level to promote affordable housing</p> <p>Municipal Liaison Group continues to meet</p> <p># New transit routes available</p>	<p>2685 new units created by 2024</p> <p>4 times per year</p> <p>6 routes open by 2021</p>	
<p>5. Create an Integrated Service Model for Housing and Supports</p>	<p>Create an integrated model for housing and supports; with a Housing First approach.</p>	<p>People experiencing homelessness obtain and retain housing</p>	<p># and % of participant households by priority population in permanent housing with supports using housing first approach (2019-)</p> <p># chronically homeless individuals in Simcoe County (2020, 2022-)</p> <p>Emergency Shelter Utilization (2019-)</p>	<p>End chronic homelessness in Simcoe County in accordance with federal and provincial goals</p>	



Housing our Future - Update

2019